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Summary record of the 62nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 10 May 2000 at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Ms. Wensley ..... (Australia)
Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Mselle

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 121: Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (*continued*)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/54/L.83/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 49 (b) (continued) (A/C.5/54/60)

1. **Mr. Darwish** (Egypt) said that consensus had been reached in informal consultations on a draft decision concerning the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/54/L.83/Rev.1. He hoped that the Committee would adopt that draft decision without a vote.

2. **The Chairman** said she took it that the Committee wished to adopt the draft decision, whereby the Committee would reaffirm General Assembly resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987 and would decide to inform the General Assembly that the adoption of draft resolution A/54/L.83/Rev.1 would give rise to an estimated requirement under the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 not exceeding $1,401,600; would indicate that such appropriation, as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, would be subject to the procedures for the use and operation of the contingency fund; and would further decide to reconsider the issue before the end of the second part of the resumed fifty-fourth session.

3. *It was so decided.*

4. **Ms. Geman** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of position, said that, while her delegation fully supported the convening of the Millennium Summit, it also recognized the need for solid justification of all expenses associated with the Summit. It welcomed the opportunities presented by that historic gathering, but had continuing concerns about the related costs and looked forward to the Committee's further consideration of the issue. It expected that the Secretariat would carry out all activities associated with the Summit in the most cost-effective manner, and hoped that a spirit of budget discipline would prevail in the Committee's discussions.

5. **Ms. Powles** (New Zealand), speaking in explanation of position on behalf of Australia, Canada and New Zealand, said that the submission of the statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/54/60) to the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee a mere two working days before the General Assembly was to adopt the draft resolution on the Millennium Summit reflected little credit on the Secretariat, which was supposed to assist the membership with the organization of the Summit. That inexplicable lateness had forced the Committee to rush its consideration of the programme budget implications. Nonetheless, she welcomed the consensus which the Committee had reached as a result of the delegations' cooperative and flexible attitude and their full support for the convening of the Summit.

6. She hoped that the Secretariat would take due note of the concerns expressed about the projected expenditures for the Summit in preparing the revised statement of programme budget implications that would be required. The useful suggestions which some delegations had made on cost-effective ways of generating publicity for the event should be seriously considered by the Department of Public Information. In addition, she wondered whether reconfiguring the Economic and Social Council chamber twice represented a necessary or sensible use of resources. The Secretariat should consider all cost-effective options for the organization of the Summit, instead of continuing to project lavish expenditures. She was not convinced that some of those costs, particularly those relating to the Department of Public Information, could not be absorbed.

7. The expenditures outlined in document A/C.5/54/60 represented about half the total cost of the Summit; the rest had already been appropriated under the programme budget for 2000-2001. Funds for the Summit should be used wisely and should not be allocated to activities which Member States had decided not to fund in the regular budget process.

8. **Ms. Buergo Rodríguez** (Cuba), speaking in explanation of position, said that her Government attached great importance to the Millennium Summit and to the preparatory process for that event. Considering the need to respect the budgetary procedures established pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 41/213 and 42/211, it would have been preferable to consider the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/54/L.83/Rev.1 at the first part of the resumed session, immediately after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 54/254. Her

delegation had taken note of the Secretariat's assurances that conference services for the informal consultations to be held prior to the Summit would be provided in the six official languages. The Secretariat should take into account the concerns expressed by a number of delegations, particularly the need to ensure that security personnel for the Summit came from within the United Nations system.

9. **Mr. Ramos** (Portugal), speaking in explanation of position on behalf of the European Union, said that he welcomed the consensus reached on the draft decision concerning the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/54/L.83/Rev.1. The Millennium Assembly was of the utmost importance to the Organization. He, too, was concerned about the late submission of the statement of programme budget implications and about the insufficiency of the information it contained. However, he appreciated the clarifications provided by the Secretariat at the preceding meeting, which had contributed to the successful outcome of the informal consultations.

10. **The Chairman** said that it was important that the Committee should be able to conduct its work in an ordered and effective manner and that she regretted the undue pressure placed on the Committee by the late submission of the statement of programme budget implications. As a result, the Committee had fallen behind in its programme of work. She would meet with the Deputy Secretary-General to express her concern about the unnecessary pressure placed on the Committee. The Committee's support for the Millennium Assembly did not preclude the expression of concern about deficiencies in the preparatory process.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.